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SUBJECT: TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY SPACE COOPERATION WORKSHOP
HELD IN BRUSSELS

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Classified By: USEU/ECON JULIE NUTTER REASONS 1.4 (a) (d) (e) and (g)

1. (SBU) Summary: On June 17, The U.S. Air Force Academy's Eisenhower Center for Space and Defense Studies hosted the Transatlantic Security Space Cooperation workshop in Brussels. The workshop brought together policy makers from the U.S. and Europe, as well as academics and NGOs, to discuss the role of space in security and the prospects of transatlantic cooperation in this area. Through panel discussions with significant audience involvement, the conference highlighted three major themes:

-- Representatives indicated that Europeans tend to believe that given the substantial gap in defense and intelligence space capacity between the U.S. and Europe, it will take several more years before the environment will be right for true cooperation. Currently, they argued, any relationship would be one directional, with the U.S. supplying technology and intellectual capital to Europe. This view was not shared by ESA representatives and may not accurately reflect the national position of many European states;

-- Despite the pessimism on the part of some, a key area for cooperation is space situational awareness (SSA). Most Europeans believe that SSA is critical to European strategic infrastructure, and the French Presidency will highlight this area during the second half of 2008, ESA is pursuing SSA system architecture as part of its expansion into non-offensive military applications, and is specifically interested in working on SSA with the United States;

-- In general, U.S. participants did not agree with the arguments made by some European participants that the time is not right for cooperation. Even if the relationship takes the form of a senior partner-junior partner arrangement, it creates the basis for an evolution over time as European security-related space infrastructure increases. However, it is clear that uncertainty regarding roles and responsibilities within Europe, and the need to create appropriate interfaces between organizations focused on military space programs versus civil space programs, are obstacles that will need to be overcome; and

-- The numerous and substantial ongoing bilateral space cooperation efforts were not fully explored during the workshop and this may have unintentionally left an impression of pessimism and lack of progress. It is true, however, that an overall strategic approach to the space domain is generally not present either multilaterally or bilaterally.
End Summary.

2. (U) Major organizations represented included: the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Union (EU), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Joint Air Power Competence Centre (JAPCC), European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES), Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategic Capabilities, National Security Space Office (NSSO), and the Space Policy Institute at George Washington University. The conference was divided into four panels of three panelists each:

-- Addressing Challenges in Transatlantic Space Security Cooperation with Prof. John Logsdon from the Space Policy Institute at George Washington University; Dr. Serge Plattard, CNES Representative in Brussels; and moderated by Amb. Roger Harrison from the Eisenhower Center;

-- Space Security Cooperation: Strategy and Policy with Colonel Tom Shearer from the National Security Space Office (NSSO); Erwin Duhamel from the European Space Agency (ESA); and moderated by Air Commodore Jan A.H. van Hoof from the Joint Air Power Competence Centre and Dutch Air Force;

-- Space security Cooperation: Defense and Deterrence Issues with Colonel Patrick Frakes, Director of Space Policy in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategic Capabilities; Dr. Wolfgang Rathgeber, Project Lead for Security Space at the European Space Policy Institute; and moderated by Dr. Peter Hays from NSSO; and

BRUSSELS 00000983 002 OF 005

-- Space Security Cooperation: Combined Coalition Space Operations with Richard McKinney, the U.S. European Space Liaison; Luigi Bella, Director of Communications and Information Systems at the NATO C3 Agency; and moderated by Major General (USAF, ret.) James Armor.

Europe not ready for space security cooperation?

13. (U) John Logsdon began the conference by detailing his thoughts on the current state of transatlantic space cooperation. He explained that there has been no history of security cooperation in space, based primarily on the concept that there is no perception in the U.S. of the benefits of such cooperation. He initiated what was to become a trend throughout the conference in highlighting the lack of balance in capacity between the U.S. and the EU, with the single exception of communication satellites. He questioned how there could be a strong trans-Atlantic partnership when Europe itself was having problems forming a true pan-European space network.

14. (U) Serge Plattard immediately concurred with Logsdon as he believes also that there is a large discrepancy between U.S. and EU space capacity, there exists no real basis on which there can be cooperation. Before there is collaboration, Europe needs to close the gap so the flow of information can travel in both directions. To close the gap, Europe must:

-- Develop a vision for the future of European space;

-- Determine what pieces of defense Europe wants; and

-- Identify what role space will play in a European defense infrastructure.

15. (SBU) When pressed on if he truly believes that Europe is not prepared for space security cooperation, Dr. Plattard responded by explaining that in the near term, this cooperation will be in niche areas, not broad scale. As examples, Dr. Plattard agreed with the audience that areas such as weather satellite or NATO satellite communication cooperation can be used as examples, but again, these are specific areas and not representative of overarching cooperative efforts. (Note: Dr. Plattard clearly was speaking for himself and not necessarily echoing sentiments felt in the French government. USEU EconOff meetings with French officials in Brussels as well as recent State and DoD dialogues with French MFA and MoD officials have indicated that Paris is very interested in both U.S.-France and U.S.-EU bilateral cooperative efforts, particularly in security areas, with no indications of the perceived gap causing concern. End note.)

16. (U) Wolfgang Rathgeber continued the pattern of expressing that the current gap between the U.S. and the EU will hinder any large-scale cooperative efforts, even while stating that there has been a history of both transatlantic civil space cooperation and defense cooperation. He reiterated previous claims that cooperation is defined by partners at a similar level in which there can be definable goals and reasonable work-load sharing. Currently, Europe does not have enough military space capabilities to attract the U.S., but Rathgeber believes that Europe is on the move and beginning to take advantage of security in space, paving the way for future cooperation.

17. (SBU) Edwin Duhamel, not fully in agreement with Logsdon or Plattard, expressed his belief that Europe needs to begin blunt discussions with the U.S. Specifically, that each side details anticipated problems, individual requirements, best practices, how to handle data exchange, and commercial tie-ins. This dialogue is absolutely necessary if Europe and the U.S. expect to have a productive cooperation, though clearly this has not yet happened. He explained that ESA

already has begun its foray into security areas in the U.S., having contact with U.S. Air Force research labs as well as State and DoD planners. (Note: ESA perspectives will not necessarily be sufficient to begin cooperation, and these statements seemed to suggest that ESA is working to prepare the market for expanding its mandate. Security issues in

BRUSSELS 00000983 003 OF 005

Europe are handled, in varying degrees, by the member states, the EU, and NATO, and ESA will need to respond to political decisions in these institutions and will not be able to go it alone. End note.)

SSA clearly Europe's cooperation focus

18. (SBU) Dr. Plattard immediately launched into the situation in Europe by opining that the failure of the Lisbon Treaty has created a substantial problem in Europe, as European defense is no longer compulsory. However, he detailed that during President Sarkozy's presentation of France's White Paper on Defense (REFTEL A); there was an emphasis in expanding intelligence capabilities, particularly in space, with the acquisition of space situational awareness (SSA), early warning, and earth observation systems. During the French Presidency, Dr. Plattard listed what will be the four space priorities: climate change, the Lisbon Agenda to strengthen EU enterprise and innovation, European space aspirations, and security issues (SSA being a part). Additionally, during the French Presidency, research ministers from EU and ESA member states will jointly meet for the fifth European Space Council in November. This meeting is expected to review a paper on international cooperation. France will work to strengthen the EU's position so that it is the EU that negotiates international cooperation policy, not ESA or the national space agencies.

19. (C//NF) Note: Dr. Plattard's comments on the Lisbon Treaty again do not echo thinking within the French government. During a meeting between USEU EconOff and a member of the French Permanent Representation, it was explained that Dr. Plattard does not represent the French Presidency, only that he represents CNES. The French official went on to explain that the four space priorities for the French during their Presidency and beyond--exploration to Mars, economic strength through space services, security, and climate change; are all permissible under the pre-Lisbon rules. As such, France doesn't expect to be slowed in its space efforts by the failure of Lisbon. When pressed on the question of security, the French official explained that several aspects of European security including border control and drug trafficking are already EU competences under existing law and through the European Space Policy from 2007, and space assets clearly can be applied to these issues. However, given the failure of the Lisbon Treaty, it is possible some of these priorities will be given less importance as France devotes resources to identifying next steps for Europe, though it is unclear how much priorities will be adjusted. End note.

110. (SBU) Duhamel described ESA's expansion of its mandate, specifically into security realms. (Note: During the conference, it was frequently noted that ESA plans to become involved in defense applications, with the exception of offensive military efforts. End note.) He explained that both the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) and the European Space Policy (ESP) have sections covering space and security, marking a basis for European development in those areas. These policies therefore enable Europe to become a global player with security as a key aspect. Within Europe, ESA has formed an SSA program office, in which it expects to apply 100 million euros for technology development as a first step in 2009-2011 and 350 million euros for development of an infrastructure. This is likely to be confirmed during the Space Council in November. SSA will be an optional program for ESA members, meaning that members can decide whether or not they wish to contribute and benefit from SSA development. In particular, Spain and Germany are large drivers for the program, with each anticipating contributing at least 30 percent of the funding.

111. (SBU) Wolfgang Rathgeber specifically targeted SSA as an opportunity for international cooperation, with the European Defense Agency gathering military requirements and Europe working to determine how to dovetail these with civil requirements. Though Dr. Rathgeber explained that SSA can act as a deterrent, providing verification and identification capabilities, Europe will continue to use diplomatic efforts, such as a code of conduct, to mitigate external threats--China's ASAT test was given as an example--as Europe

BRUSSELS 00000983 004 OF 005

has no counterspace tenets currently with none foreseen in the future. (Note: It seemed as though Rathgeber's responses were tied up in semantics. He defined defensive counterspace as a military response to an attack on space assets, whereas the audience tended to define it as active protection of space assets. Further, the discussion highlighted the need for a better common conceptual foundation for improved dialogue on key issues such as space weaponization on both sides of Atlantic. United States Joint Doctrine uses the terms surveillance, protection, prevention, and negation but it is not clear what the comparable conceptual or semantic foundations are in Europe. End note.)

12. (U) Luigi Bella focused his discussion on the space strategy at NATO, expressing that there is a definite need for NATO to become more involved in space security. He explained that in theater, there is a constant push for more intelligence data and exchange of information for use in operations as well as an increase in the use of communications satellites. Increased satellite infrastructures can move toward those goals. Separately, the use of satellites can assist in handling wide-spread needs which currently require local solutions repeated across several sites, thereby using valuable resources. Bella's example was that of perimeter monitoring of bases in Afghanistan, in which persistent satellite coverage can support several locations, freeing resources for other needs. In moving to SSA, Bella compared to cyber defense in NATO, which is only defensive. Much like a good cyber defense capability, SSA can identify the threat or attacker, which in some cases is much easier in the event of an attack on space assets than it is in an attack on a computer network.

U.S. believes time is right for cooperation

13. (SBU) COL Shearer responded to questions asking if Europe was ready for cooperation by offering two options; either each side goes it alone or begins the cooperation in a senior partner-junior partner relationship which will evolve over time as Europe increases its capacity. He recommended moving toward the latter, as the U.S. and Europe will continue to operate together, and it is therefore necessary that the two sides learn how to work together to support common interests. There already exists great cooperation through NATO and that should be able to act as a base on which cooperation in space can be built. Overall, the two sides have much more in common than there are differences, specifically recognition of the high costs of space and need for safety of flight. Therefore, the two sides should work together to standardize and stay interoperable as well as ensuring the use of space for peaceful purposes.

14. (SBU) Richard McKinney echoed many of the sentiments presented by COL Shearer, specifically through detailing the existing exchanges between the U.S. Air Force and allied militaries in aircraft. With this in mind, he expressed his belief that these exchanges can certainly take place in space. The economics are clear to both sides given the price of space assets and funding levels in the U.S. and the EU, which should lead to further cooperative opportunities. Additionally, as new systems come online, designed by either side, cooperation is essential to ensure trans-Atlantic interoperability and to define rules for data sharing.

15. (SBU) COL Frakes was in agreement that cooperation is possible, though a possible obstacle is the organizational structure of the respective space infrastructures in the U.S. and Europe. In the U.S., space is divided into three sectors: national security (handled by DOD), civil (handled by NASA), and commercial; while in Europe, particularly with the expansion of ESA's mandate to include security and defense, the lines are much more blurred. COL Frakes questioned Europe's organizational structure explaining his belief that while developing all systems from a dual-use perspective is easier initially, it will certainly cause problems down the road. Given the blurred lines in Europe, it is therefore much easier to share weather data between NASA and ESA than to share security information between DOD and ESA. As such, DOD policy is to work with Europe on space security issues through NATO, which can then liaise with the EU and ultimately ESA. A specific area of cooperation,

BRUSSELS 00000983 005 OF 005

echoing many of the other participants' thoughts, is in SSA, which requires international cooperation, where Europe can now bring capabilities to the table.

Outlook and next steps

16. (SBU) Overall, participants considered the conference a success. Though it became clear there are differences in opinion between the U.S. and Europe, and to an extent within European institutions themselves, most participants agreed that the dialogue should continue. There are indications that a European institute similar to the Eisenhower Center will be called upon to host a second conference, though to expand the topic set to include civil and commercial space cooperation. These are considered successful areas of transatlantic cooperation, and though the mechanics and instruments for security cooperation are different, several participants believed there are best practices from the civil and commercial sectors which can help move the process forward.

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